

D. 1753

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A Living
TESTIMONY

From the Power and Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ
in our Faithful

Womens Meeting

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CHRISTIAN SOCIETY.

*Given forth in the Universal Union, and Approbation
thereof, according to our several Proportions of Faith
and Life, in the same Spirit.*

THe Spirit of Grace having freely visited all Mankind;
the Lord hath had regard unto the low estate of his
Servants and Handmaids, notwithstanding the *En-
mity and Subtily and secret Smittings* of that Spirit which
seeks to *Divide* and lay *Waste* the *Heritage* of God, whom
he hath Quickned, and Raised up *Heirs* of Life together, in
the *Fellowship* of the Gospel of Peace, which stands in the
Unity of that Spirit which gives *Life*; and our *Life, Peace*
and *Joy* is increased in the Lord one toward another, where-

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we are made *Living* Members of that Body which Christ Jesus our Lord is *Head*, Glory to our God forever.

And we being turned to the Spirit of *Grace* and *Light* of Christ do believe in the *Light*, and are become *Children* of his *Light*, of his *Day*, and so *Members* of his holy Body, of which Christ is the Living and Eternal heavenly Head; and by the Spirit of *Grace* we are come into Favour with God, and into the Order of his Gospel, and are his *Daughters*, *Servants* and *Handmaids*; and we have a Heavenly propriety in the *Light*, *Power* and *Spirit* of *Grace*, and the *Gospel*, being *Heirs* of the same; so by *Grace* we are called into the Work and Service of God and Jesus Christ, that they require of us in our Age and Generation, and we have our Wisdom from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Rock of Ages, and the Foundation of many Generations, who is made unto us Wisdom; and he hath enlightned our Spirits, which is the Candle of the Lord, which his heavenly divine Light, which is the Life that is in Christ, the Word by which all things were made, that we might all see and know the Will of God, and do it, and know our several Works and Services the Lord requireth of us in his Church, we are not to put our Candles under a Bushel, nor to hide our Talents in a Napkin, as the sloathful do; but we are to have Oyl in our Lamps, like Wise Virgins to the Lord; and our Lamps are to burn, and our Lights are to shine, that we may all see clearly our Work and Service; namely, To help Families that are Poor, and have Children, and to see that they are diligent to improve things to the best; that they are not slothful in their business, no Wasters, and that they put their Children to some Employment, as soon as they are capable; for the Truth hath a lively operation, it brings People to be diligent in all things, serving the Lord. For we which have been Mothers of Children, and Ancient Women in our

our Families, do know, in the VVisdom of God, what will do in Families, in Truth and Righteousness, and according to the Families; and so are able, through the VVisdom of God, to instruct such as want Instruction, and so are Helps to them in their Families: And as the Apostle saith, *The Elder Women are to be Teachers of good things, and instruct and teach the Younger to be Sober, and love their Husbands and Children, and to be discreet, good and chaste, that the Word of God be not blasphemed.*

So here is a great charge and care lies upon these Aged Women in the Truth, who are to teach these good things, that the Younger be trained up in that which is good, sober and discreet, chaste and virtuous; so to be kept before they Marry, and after they are Married, sober, and to love their Husbands, and Children, and bring them up in the fear of the Lord, that the Name of the Lord be not blasphemed. Here we Aged Women in the Truth, have a Gift to be exercised in; and such a care lieth upon us, that the Church of Christ be not scandalized.

And we have a concern, as in *Tit. 2.* relating to Marriages, both before and after they are Married; and such Elderly Women in the Truth, are to be intreated as Mothers, and so not to be Railed upon; and the Younger, as Sisters, with all Purity, and Widows, that are VVidows indeed, are to be honoured; and if they have Children or Nephews, let them learn first to shew Piety or Kindness at Home, and to requite their Parents and Kindred; for this is good and acceptable before God.

Now this is a good Lesson for the VVidows, to instruct their Children and Nephews to Practice. And so we may see such holy VVomen, that were taken into the Number and Society in that day, were to be well reported for good

Works, *Lodging Strangers*, and *Relieving the Afflicted*, and if she have diligently followed every good Work; these were of the Number of good *Women*, that were taken into the Number for their good Works and Service in the Church of Christ, and that were recorded for their Works and Service to the Lord.

Now here is a diligent Practice and Exercise in the Power and Spirit of God, and to be diligent in every good Work and Service, *To relieve the Afflicted, and to bring up Children in the fear of God; and to be Teachers of good things, and Instructors of the Younger, that the Name of God be not Blasphemed.*

So here you may see the Apostle was of another Mind than those perverse corrupt Minds, full of *Envy* and *Strife*, *Railing* and *evil Surmizing*, and some that wilfully, scoffingly, maliciously and revilingly call the *Womens Meetings* an *Idol* and an *Image*; but such Raging Waves of the Sea have but foamed out their own Shame, and manifested they are erred from the Spirit of Grace, which God poureth forth upon *Daughters*, *Servants* and *Hand-maids*, which have received as well as Sons, and are to improve their Talents and measure of the Gift of God, and *not to grieve nor quench the holy Spirit, nor walk despitfully against the Spirit of Grace*, as some do, whereby we are sealed to the day of Redemption.

And concerning *Marriages*, it being God's joyning, and his Ordinance, we Women in the Spirit and Grace of God, being living Members of the Church of Christ, do see with the Spirit of God, our Service concerning Marriage, that both Young and Old that profess Gods Truth, may go together orderly, first having their Relations consent; for many times we having seen, and do see more in the Young People and Widdows State and Condition, than some of the Men, because we are more amongst them; so in that we
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dare not neglect our Gift in the Spirit of Wisdom and Grace, but exercise and improve it to this glory and honour, and in that we are meet Helps in the Spirit of God, to the Men, our Brethren; knowing that *Male and Female are one in Christ*; for the *Unity and Fellowship of Sons and Daughters, Widdows and Servants*, stands in the Spirit of God, and we in the same Spirit know our great Service to look after and *visit the Sick* that want *Nurses* to help them, and sometimes assisting the Men, our Brethren, to the placing out our poor Friends Children to Apprentices, and other good Services that the Spirit of God lead th us to, and into the practice of the pure Religion, and that all such as do profess the Grace of God, may live and walk godly, righteously and soberly in their Lives and Conversation, all such as profess the Word of God may be Doers of the Word of God; for all that fear God and work Righteousness, are accepted with God. And so, the Aged Women in the Truth were and are to be Teachers of such good things; but such wanton Women or Widdows, that are Tale-carriers and busie Bodies, that speak things they ought not, and such Men that are in Envy and Strife, and are puffed up with high swelling Words of Vanity, and vain unruly Talkers, Despisers of them that are good, having got into the form of Godliness, but not in the Power: Such were in the Apostles days, as well as now, reprov'd by the Spirit of God, and turned away from; and we cannot receive their Chaff and Husks for the Seed, Wheat, or the Bread of Life; neither their Earthly sensual Wisdom for the Wisdom of God; and therefore have several of such unruly Spirits printed and written so many slanderous reproachful Books against us, and made disturbance against our Meetings, under a false pretence, as though they would call us to our own, as it was in the beginning; which if they themselves had kept to that that first convinced them, they would have shewed forth a quiet and meek Spirit, who under a pretence of calling People to their own, have drawn People from their own;

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own; for we are come to our *Light, Spirit, Grace and Word of Life*, and *Anointing within*, which is our own, which at first convinced us, and which doth teach us to be *Doers of the Word of God*, and to *live Righteously*, and to practice the *true Religion*; and them that do not, the spirit of the Lord moveth us, and teacheth us to admonish and exhort them to *forsake the Evil, and cleave to the Good*; and them that oppose the Practice and Care, in the Spirit and Grace of God, of Men and Women in their Meetings, had they kept to the *Light, Grace, Truth and Spirit of God*, and *Uction within them*, they would have been one with us in the same, and in the practice of the *pure Religion*, and in the *Godly Care for God's Honour*; but many of them are turned *Mockers, Scoffers, Writers and Printers* against us, and are become *vain Talkers*. But we leave them to the Lord, to deal with according to their Words and Works: And we right-well know our *Services*, which the Spirit of Grace hath led us to in the Church of Christ.

And as to our orderly proceeding toward *Marriage*, we say and affirm, the *Man and Woman* both ought to appear at the *Monethly Meetings*, and Meetings for such Services, where we and the Men may hear what both have to say, that Men and Women may not be wronged of their Children, and that they are clear from all other Persons, that the Meeting, and all others concerned, may have satisfaction, in that *Life, Grace and Spirit of Christ*, in which is our Unity, and may be *faithful Witnesses* both to God and Man, in our own *Gift of Grace*, in which God hath, and doth own us: And all that write, and print, and speak against our Practice (which the Spirit of Grace hath led us to in the Church of Christ) reach us not, neither are they of any credit with us; For we have put on the Breast-plate of *Faith and Love*, and for an *Helmet*, the *Hope of Salvation*. And so our desires are, *That whatever things are pure, vertuous, lovely, sober, honest, and of good Report,*
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and that every one may follow that which makes for *Peace*, and that they may study to be *Quiet*, and do the Lords Business in his Spirit and Power, and their own in Truth and Righteousness, and walk as Children of the Light, in the day of Christ, and in meekness instruct them that oppose themselves, *If God peradventure may give them Repentance to the acknowledgment of the Truth; Greet one another with a holy Kiss of Charity; Peace be with you all that are in Christ Jesus, Amen,* Rom. 16. 1 Cor. 16. 20. 2 Cor. 13. 22. 1 Pet. 5. 14.

Now this holy Kiss of *Charity* is wanting, and not to be found, nor expected from them that do not walk in the Spirit of God. And the Apostle saith, *I intreat thee, true Fellow, help these Women which laboured with me in the Gospel, with Clement also, and with others my Fellow-Labourers, whose Names are written in the Book of Life, Phil. 4. 3. There is one God and Father of all, which is above all, and through you all, and in you all by his Spirit.* So all may see with his Spirit, the Lord is near unto all to teach them to know their Service; and if these do lack wisdom, to ask it of God, who giveth liberally, and take counsel of him who is nigh unto you, and walk worthy of the Lords mercies, being faithful in every good work; for to do good & communicate, is a Sacrifice well pleasing to the Lord, and we who are made the Sons and Daughters, Servants and Handmaids, by the Spirit of God, in the same Spirit we have Unity and Fellowship, though we be absent in body one from another, yet we are present in the same Spirit, and by the spiritual Eye do see and behold, and rejoyce in our spiritual Order, and one anothers steadfastness in Christ Jesus. And so we have a communion in the Holy Ghost, both Sons and Daughters; and if any thing the Men do see that is more proper for the Women to do, and to look into, they do let us know of it, as Sisters in the Truth; and if any thing we see that is more proper for the Men, than for us, then we let them know as our Brethren in the Truth; so in this we do assist

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assist each other in the Spirit and Truth, and are meet helps
in the heavenly Spiritual Union and Communion, and Fel-
lowship and Society, and do know the unity of the Spirit of
Christ, which is the Bond of Peace, and in this heavenly Spi-
rit that reaches through all, and over all, and is in you all,
our dear Sisters every where, in Christ Jesus, 'tis you we visit,
to whom we recommend this Epistle, Farewel.

Postscript.

WE have been a People that have sought the Lord, and now
we have found him, we are willing to obey him in his Power
and holy Spirit, that he hath given us to enable us so to do; and
though we are persecuted in spirit, and other ways, by unruly Tongues
that have not power with their hands; such that are Sayers of the
the Word of God, and Talkers of the Grace of God, and of the
Righteousness of Christ, but not Doers of the Word, nor walkers
in the Righteousness and Grace of God, their ungracious Languages
and Words, that they have spoken and Printed against us, shew the
Trees and their Fruit, whom we desire may come to the Light of
Christ, that with it they may see themselves, and repent; for we
desire the Salvation and Eternal Good of all.

Signed by us, in the behalf of the rest of our sincere Minded
Members of our Meeting,

London, from our Women's Meeting,
gathered out of the City and Su-
burbs, the 1st. of the 1st. Month,
1685.

Mary Foster,
Mary Elson,
Anne Traxice,
Ruth Cronch,
Susannah Dew,
Mary Plumstead.

THE END.